



Scoil Aine

Roll Number: 19567K

**Policy
on**

Code of Behaviour

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Due to the unique nature of Scoil Aine as part of a specialised service for children and adolescents with various mental health or psychological issues there may be instances when an individual is attending the CAMHS service primarily due to a very significant, serious behavioural issue. In this case the behavioural issue will be dealt with intensively in a therapeutic forum (CAMHS multidisciplinary team) and so is beyond the remit of this policy document.

For students attending Scoil Aine for different reasons the following policy applies. A Code of Behaviour for staff, pupils and visitors ensures that the rights of all are upheld.

A Positive School Community

Good behaviour is based on good relations between parents/guardians, child and school. The central focus of the Scoil Aine Code of Behaviour is on affirming positive behaviour. Positive reinforcement of good behaviour leads to better self-discipline and we place a much greater emphasis on rewards and incentives than on sanctions.

The aims of the Scoil Aine's Code of Behaviour are:

- To create a positive learning environment that encourages and reinforces good behaviour.
- To promote self-esteem and positive relationships.
- To encourage consistency of response to both positive and negative behaviour.
- To foster a sense of responsibility and self-discipline in pupils and to support good behaviour patterns based on consideration and respect for the rights of others.
- To facilitate the education and development of every child.
- To foster caring attitudes to one another and to the environment.
- To enable teachers/SNA staff/Social Care leaders to engage in educational and self-development work with the students without disruption.
- To ensure that the school's expectations and strategies are widely known and understood through an ethos of open communication and the availability of policies.
- To encourage the involvement of home, Scoil Aine and the student's base school (where appropriate) in the implementation of this policy.

In Scoil Aine, we hope to foster these aims in co-operation with parents/guardians. We have adopted a positive Code of Behaviour with the emphasis on encouragement and reward. Successful implementation of this Code of Behaviour aids students in their reintegration back to their mainstream schools.

Responsibility of the Adults

Every member of the school team, Principal, Teachers, Special Needs Assistants and Social Care Leaders. We, as the adults encountered by the children at school, have a responsibility to model high standards of behaviour, both in our dealings with the children and with each other.

As adults we should aim to:

- Create a positive climate with realistic expectations.
- Promote positive behaviour, through example, honesty and courtesy.
- Provide a caring and effective learning environment.
- Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others.
- Ensure fair treatment for all regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
- Show appreciation of the efforts and contribution of all.
- To discourage physical aggression and encourage these appropriate behaviours -

‘Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet’.

Rules

As a school catering for children and teenagers with severe emotional and behavioural challenges, we keep school rules to a minimum and they are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community. The school operates six Golden Rules which emphasise positive behaviour and will be applied in a fair and consistent manner throughout the school, with due regard to the ages of the pupils and to individual difference. These rules are:

1. We listen. We don't interrupt.
2. We are gentle. We don't hurt others.
3. We are honest. We tell the truth.
4. We are kind.
5. We work hard. We don't waste time.
6. We look after property. We don't damage things.

These rules apply during school-time and during all school related activities.

Positive Behaviour Approaches

The central role of Scoil Aine is to help children face their specific challenges, overcome them and move on to or reintegrate back into their long term school life where they can successfully continue their education. The school utilises a variety of approaches to incentivize and promote students to achieve important personal and behavioural goals, which vary according to the individual students

Our positive behaviour approaches seek to provide encouragement to children of all ages, abilities and talents. Children and adolescents will be encouraged, praised and listened to by adults in the school.

Following listed are samples of the positive behaviour approaches and teaching strategies used by the school team for encouraging the maintenance of positive behaviours and for dealing with misdemeanours

Focussed Praise

- A quiet word or gesture to show approval
- A comment in a pupil's copy or homework diary
- A visit to another member of Staff or to the Principal for commendation
- A word of praise in front of a group or class
- Delegating some special responsibility or privilege
- A mention to parent, written or verbal communication
- Use of age appropriate tangibles or special mention at assembly.
-

Credit Systems

- Stop Think Do
- Reward charts
- Incentives
- Token systems

Problem Solving Approaches

- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)
- Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)
- Social stories
- Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI)
- Life space interview
- ABC – functional analysis of behaviours

Emotional Regulation / Self Esteem / Social Skills Programmes

- SPHE/ CSPE curricula
- Circle Time activities
- Walk Tall
- Zippy's Friends
- Anger management programmes
- Friends for Life programme
- Mindfulness /Yoga
- MDT Interventions for recommendations

Whole School Approaches (adapt elements for our situation)

- Incredible Years
- Discipline for learning
- Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP)
- Risk Assessments
- Structured settings – TEACCH
- Communication supports - SLT/ Lamh/ PECS
- Therapeutic supports – OT/Sensory integration/Oral–motor programmes/
Listening therapy/ Sensory diet/ Play therapy

Our response to inappropriate behaviours

Our aim is always to help the pupil identify his/her inappropriate behaviours and equip him/her with more appropriate skills and ways of dealing with stressful situations.

We educate the students through the following methods:

1. Reasoning with the student
2. Verbal correction including advice
STOP – THINK – DO THE RIGHT THING
3. Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class
4. Social story approach
5. Communication with parents
6. Referral to Principal
7. Principal communicating with parents
8. Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and Education Welfare Act 2000)
 - Pupils will not be deprived of engagement in a Curricular Area, except on the grounds of health/safety
 - Field trips, school outings and special events will be reserved for those who do not pose a health and safety risk and who have consistently striven to behave well.
 - With regard to detention the normal channels of communication between school and parents will be utilized. Where it is proposed to detain a pupil after school hours, the parents or guardians will be notified. Communication with parents may be verbal or by letter depending on the circumstances.

Where significant difficulties arise (serious/gross misbehaviour), parents are contacted immediately for a school team (relevant members) meeting, including the student.

Examples of serious/gross misbehaviour include:

- Behaviour that is hurtful (bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation)/ Serious bullying
- Behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning
- Threats of physical hurt to another person/Assault on another pupil or staff member
- Damage or theft to property/Serious damage or theft to property
- Bringing dangerous equipment to school/Carrying drugs, alcohol, cigarettes
- Leaving school/school activities without permission

Measures appropriate to the behaviour are agreed at the meeting and put in place. These measures serve the purposes of:

- helping students to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others

- helping students (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour
- reinforcing the boundaries set out in the Code of Behaviour
- signalling to other students and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected
- preventing serious disruption of teaching and learning
- keeping the student, or other students or adults, safe.

Suspension/Expulsion

Suspension or expulsion is rarely an occurrence in Scoil Aine because some of the children referred to our school have already been excluded or are very close to being excluded from their own school. In such cases, the Scoil Aine mission is to effect an improvement in the child's behaviour so that he/she can be successfully reintegrated into his/her own school, with the hope that further suspensions/expulsions will not occur for the student.

Aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour towards another pupil or staff member will be regarded as serious or gross misbehaviour. The Principal may review the case in consultation with teachers and other members of the school community involved, with due regard to records of previous misbehaviours, their pattern and context, sanctions and other interventions used and their outcomes and any relevant medical information. For gross misbehaviour or repeated instances of serious misbehaviour suspension may be considered. Parents concerned will be invited to come to the school to discuss their child's case. The Principal will facilitate the preparation of a behaviour plan for the pupil if required and will re-admit the pupil formally to the class.

In the case of gross misbehaviour, where it is necessary to ensure that order and discipline are maintained and to secure the safety of the pupils, the Board may authorise the Chairperson or Principal to sanction an immediate suspension for a period not exceeding three school days, pending a discussion of the matter with the parents.

Expulsion may be considered in an extreme case, in accordance with the Rule for National Schools and the Education Welfare Act 2000. Before suspending or expelling a pupil, the Board shall notify the Education Welfare Officer in writing in accordance with Section 24 of the Education Welfare Act. The parent/s must give a satisfactory undertaking that a suspended pupil will behave in accordance with the school code and the Principal must be satisfied that the pupil's reinstatement will not constitute a risk to the pupil's own safety or that of the other pupils or staff.

Students with significant emotional / behavioural challenges

All our students are required to comply with the Code of Behaviour. However the school recognises that many students are referred to Scoil Aine precisely because they have significant challenges with regard to their emotional and behavioural regulation. They may require greater assistance in understanding certain rules. Specialised behaviour plans are put in place in consultation with parents and the class teacher, SNA, social care leader and/or principal. The school team works closely with home to ensure that optimal support is given to the student and the family. The student's level of cognition is always taken into account. Professional advice from the CAMHS teams is drawn upon at all times.

In the case of out of control behaviour or serious misdemeanour, Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) techniques and TMV techniques are used by the teacher, SNA, child's key worker (social care leader), and principal. All staff members are trained in these techniques and have refresher training as required. The behavioural support and intervention is given to the individual in a supportive and safe way, acknowledging and respecting the difference in all individuals and the very specific emotional/behavioural challenges facing them.

Bullying

Bullying is repeated aggression – physical, verbal or emotional - conducted by an individual or group against another or others ie.

- PHYSICAL: includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, tripping, etc.
- VERBAL: name calling which hurts, insults or humiliates.
- EMOTIONAL: threats or persistent hurtful remarks regarding sensitive areas e.g. appearance, dress, progress, colour, culture and disability. Isolating or shunning a child. Threats to extort money or possessions. “Cyber/text” bullying.

The school takes particular care to intervene early in responding to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour, while not to be condoned, cannot be described as bullying.

Issues in relation to Bullying are explored continually during SPHE lessons and using Circle Time, Drama etc.

Should a parent/guardian have any concerns which need to be discussed with a teacher, all staff members are more than willing to facilitate a meeting that is made through the proper channels i.e. a phone call to the office, or a note to the class teacher to arrange a convenient time for both parties. The first person to be informed should be the class teacher. This arrangement ensures that all concerns are dealt with in a dignified, meaningful manner, without infringing on valuable teaching time.

In the case where a parent reports a bullying incident, the school reserves the right to inform the relevant parties of the identity of the person making the complaint, when this is deemed necessary.

Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in the same manner as breaches of discipline – already outlined in our Code of Behaviour.

Communicating with Parents

Communicating with parents is central to maintaining a positive approach to dealing with our children who present with significant emotional / behavioural challenges. Parents and teachers should develop a joint strategy to address specific difficulties, in addition to sharing a broader philosophy which can be implemented at home and in school.

A high level of co-operation and open communication is seen as an important factor in fostering positive behaviour in the individual students. Structures and channels designed to maintain a high level of communication among staff and between staff, pupils and parents have been established and are reviewed regularly to ensure effectiveness.

Parents are encouraged to talk in confidence to teachers/SNA's about any significant developments in a child's life (in the past or present), which may affect the child's behaviour.

The following methods of communication are to be used within the school:

- Informal contact daily / weekly
- Formal parent/teacher/SNA/social care leader meetings
- Through children's homework diaries/ two way diaries/student absence notes
- Letters/notes from school to home and from home to school
- School notice board
- TextaParent service.

Policies relevant to the Code of Behaviour

The following policies/curriculum plans support the Code of Behaviour

- o Anti-bullying/Anti-cyberbullying
- o Child Protection
- o Admission, Participation and Discharge
- o Data protection & Record keeping
- o Health Safety & Welfare
- o Special Educational Needs
- o SPHE/ CSPE curricula

Success Criteria

- Observation of positive behaviour in class rooms, playground and school environment
- Students achieving levels of self management that enables them move on to new or return successfully to their own base schools and move on with their education
- Positive feedback from staff team, parents and pupils, staff of students base schools, members of CAMHS multidisciplinary teams (CAMHS)

Roles and Responsibility

1. The Board of Management of the school has ultimate responsibility for behaviour in the school, for providing a safe environment and for reviewing the Code of Behaviour and its implementation regularly, as required by the DES.
2. Within the school, the overall day to day responsibility for behaviour rests with the Principal.
3. Each teacher, Special Needs Assistant and Social Care Leader has the responsibility for the maintenance of good behaviour and good order within classrooms while sharing a common responsibility for good behaviour within the school premises.
4. Parents/guardians can support the school by encouraging their children to understand the need for school rules, and by communicating any relevant concerns to the school.

This policy will be left in the Principal's office and will be made available to the parents, school staff and all other people who work with the children. It was most recently reviewed in 2020.

Ratified by Board of Management on _____
Date

Signed _____
Chairperson, Board of Management